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LENGTH OF DAYS

TO THE EARLY DEAD IN BATTLE, 1915

BY ALICE MEYNEL.

THERE is no length of days

But yours, boys who were children! How, of old,
The past beset you in your childish ways,
With sense of Time untold!

What have you then for gone?

A history? This you had. Or memories?
These, too, you had of your far-distant dawn.
No further dawn seems his,

The old man who shares with you,

But has no more, no more. Time's mystery
Did once for him the most that it can do:
He has had infancy.

And all his dreams, and all

His loves for mighty Nature, sweet and few,
Are but the dwindling part he can recall
Of what his childhood knew.

He counts not any more

His brief, his present years. But, oh, he knows
How far apart the summers were of yore,
How far apart the snows.

Therefore be satisfied;

Long life is in your treasury ere you fall;
Yes, and first love, like Dante's. Oh, a bride
For ever mystical!

Irrevocable good,

You dead, and now about, so young, to die,
Your childhood was; there space, there multitude,
There dwelt antiquity.

ALICE MEYNELL.